

Amendment to the Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A process to prepare base oils from a Fischer-Tropsch synthesis product, the processing comprising
    - (a) separating the Fischer-Tropsch synthesis product into a fraction (i) boiling in the middle distillate range and below, a heavy ends fraction (iii) and an intermediate base oil precursor fraction (ii) boiling between fraction (i) and fraction (iii);
    - (b) subjecting the base oil precursor fraction (ii) to a catalytic hydroisomerization and catalytic dewaxing process to yield one or more base oil grades;
    - (c) subjecting the heavy ends fraction (iii) to a ~~conversion step~~ thermal cracking process to yield a fraction (iv) boiling below the heavy ends fraction (iii); and,
    - (d) subjecting ~~the~~ a high boiling fraction (v) of fraction (iv) to a catalytic hydroisomerization and catalytic dewaxing process to yield one or more base oil grades.
  2. (Previously Presented) The process of according to claim 1, wherein the heavy ends fraction (iii) has an initial boiling point of between 500 °C and 600 °C.
  3. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 1, wherein step (b) is performed in the presence of a catalyst comprising a noble metal hydrogenation component and a molecular sieve selected from the group consisting of zeolite beta, ZSM-23, ZSM-22, ZSM-35 or ZSM-12.
- Claims 4-6 (Canceled).
7. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 1, wherein step (d) is performed in the presence of a catalyst comprising a noble metal hydrogenation component and a molecular sieve selected from the group of zeolite beta, ZSM-23, ZSM-22, ZSM-35 or ZSM-12.
  8. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 1, wherein the feed to step (a), step (b) and/or step (c) is first hydrogenated.

Claims 9-10 (Canceled).

11. (Currently Amended) The process of claim 9~~1~~, wherein the fraction boiling below 370 °C as obtained in step (c) is subjected to an oligomerization step (f).

12. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 11, wherein a base oil fraction is prepared in step (f) and which base oil fraction is mixed with the base oil products obtained in step (b) and/or (d).

13. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 11, wherein a base oil fraction is prepared in step (f) and which base oil fraction is dewaxed in step (b).

14. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 1, wherein the effluent of step (c) is provided to step (a), such that in effect steps (b) and (d) take place simultaneously.

Claim 15 (Canceled).

16. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 2, wherein step (b) is performed in the presence of a catalyst comprising a noble metal hydrogenation component and a molecular sieve selected from the group consisting of zeolite beta, ZSM-23, ZSM-22, ZSM-35 or ZSM-12.

Claims 17-19 (Canceled).

20. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 2, wherein step (d) is performed in the presence of a catalyst comprising a noble metal hydrogenation component and a molecular sieve selected from the group of zeolite beta, ZSM-23, ZSM-22, ZSM-35 or ZSM-12.

21. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 2, wherein the feed to step (a), step (b) and/or step (c) is first hydrogenated.

Claims 22-28 (Canceled).